

The Testing and Assessment of Speaking Skills within the CEFR approach

Geoffrey Tranter

Programme

A] What is the CEFR approach?

1. Communication
2. Tasks
3. Authenticity
4. “Learnercentred-ness”

>>> Consequences for/Questions to a speaking test to meet the CEFR approach

Programme

B] What skills/sub-skills does CEFR cover?

1. Oral Production
2. Spoken Interaction

>>> Consequences for/Questions to a speaking test to meet the CEFR approach

Programme

C] What quality categories does CEFR cover?

1. Linguistic competences
2. Pragmatic consequences
3. Strategic competences (Interaction/Production)

>>> Consequences for/Questions to a speaking test to meet the CEFR approach in terms of marking criteria

A] What is the CEFR approach?

1. Communication

Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and social agents develop a range of competences, both general and in particular communicative language competences. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various contexts under various conditions to engage in language activities involving language processes to produce and/or receive texts in relation to topics in specific domains, activating those strategies which seem most appropriate for carrying out the tasks to be accomplished. (CEFR, Chapter 2)

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A] What is the CEFR approach?

1. Communication

The key concepts of language use within the CEFR approach are:

“actions”

“social agents”

“activities”

“producing and receiving texts”

“activating”

“to engage in language activities ”

“to accomplish tasks”

A] What is the CEFR approach?

1. Communication

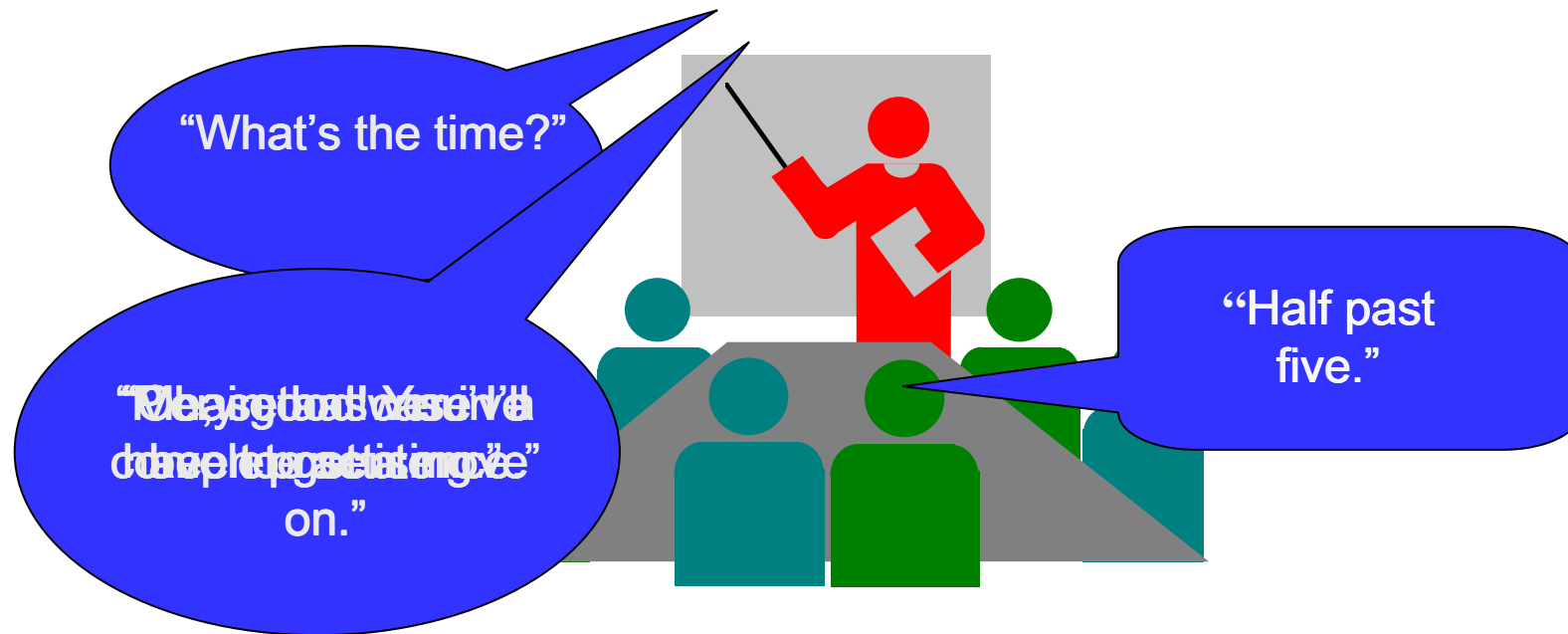
In other words: the CEFR has in terms of language use and communication an “action-based approach”.

This approach describes not only language activities outside the classroom. It also “embraces language learning”.

And in the same way it should embrace testing.

A] What is the CEFR approach?

1. Communication



A] What is the CEFR approach?

1. Communication



A] What is the CEFR approach?

2. Tasks

The “action-based” approach involves the use of tasks.

= Question:

What are “tasks”?

What are the main features of “tasks”?

A] What is the CEFR approach?

2. Tasks

Tasks have an aim/goal, some kind of result or end-product.

Tasks are a feature of everyday life in the personal, public, educational or occupational domains. Task accomplishment by an individual involves the strategic activation of specific competences in order to carry out a set of purposeful actions in a particular domain with a clearly defined goal and a specific outcome. (CEFR, Chapter 7)

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A] What is the CEFR approach?

2. Tasks

Tasks have an aim/goal, some kind of result or end-product.

Tasks should require reasons for reading and listening, not only writing and speaking.

Communication is an integral part of tasks where participants engage in interaction, production, reception or mediation, or a combination of two or more of these, for example: interacting with a public service official and completing a form; reading a report and discussing it with colleagues in order to arrive at a decision on a course of action; ... (CEFR, Chapter 7)

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A] What is the CEFR approach?

2. Tasks

Tasks have an aim/goal, some kind of result or end-product.

Tasks should require reasons for reading and listening, not only writing and speaking.

The participants should be able to make use of their own ideas, experience, opinions, etc.

Similar kinds of tasks are a central unit in many syllabuses, textbooks, classroom learning experiences and tests, although often in a modified form for learning or testing purposes. These ‘real-life’, ‘target’ or ‘rehearsal’ tasks are chosen on the basis of learners’ needs outside the classroom, whether in the personal and public domains, or related to more specific occupational or educational needs. (CEFR, Chapter 7)

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A] What is the CEFR approach?

2. Tasks

Tasks are communicative activities in the sense that there is an information or opinion gap.

The aim of the tasks should be of interest and relevance for the participants.

The language used in tasks should be as authentic as possible.

A] What is the CEFR approach?

3. Authenticity

Two levels of authenticity are possible within the CEFR approach:

Complete authenticity in the sense that what is taking place in the test could just as easily be taking place outside the test.

Relative authenticity in the sense that what is taking place is perceived as a typical example of what does or will take place outside the test .

A] What is the CEFR approach?

4. Learner-centredness

The aim of the tasks should be of interest and relevance for the participants.

The participants should be able to make use of their own ideas, experience, opinions, etc.

Consequences for/Questions to a speaking test to meet the CEFR approach

peer group format(?)

acceptable level of authenticity(?)

target group relevance(?)

no unknown, fictitious role for the candidates(?)

tasks should have a clear aim(?)

as little structuring as possible(?)

B] What skills/sub-skills does CEFR cover?

1. Oral production

Overall oral production

Sustained monologue: describing experience

Sustained monologue: putting a case

Public announcements

Addressing audiences

B] What skills/sub-skills does CEFR cover?

2. Oral interaction

Conversation

Informal discussion (with friends)

Formal discussion and meetings

Goal-oriented co-operation

Transactions to obtain goods and services

Information exchange

Interviewing and being interviewed

Consequences for/Questions to a speaking test to meet the CEFR approach

all skills and sub-skills(?)

target group relevance(?)

can/should a test that does not include a speaking test call itself (e.g. B1) and issue a (e.g. B1) certificate(?)

can oral proficiency be tested by m/c?

C] What quality categories does CEFR cover?

1. Linguistic competences

General linguistic range

Vocabulary range

Vocabulary control

Grammatical accuracy

Phonological control

C] What quality categories does CEFR cover?

2. Pragmatic competences

Turn-taking/Taking the floor

Coherence/Cohesion

Spoken fluency

Propositional precision

Thematic development

C] What quality categories does CEFR cover?

3a. Strategic competences - Interaction

Turn-taking/Taking the floor

Asking for Clarification

Co-operating

C] What quality categories does CEFR cover?

3b. Strategic competences - Production

Compensating

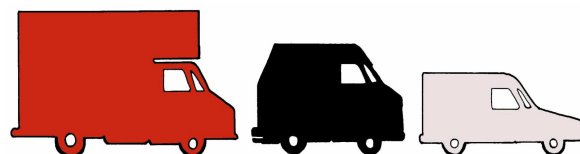
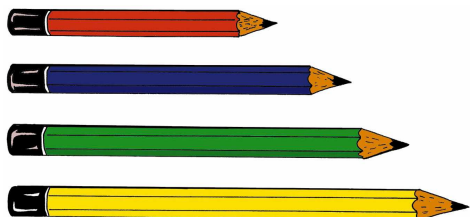
Monitoring and Repairing

Planning

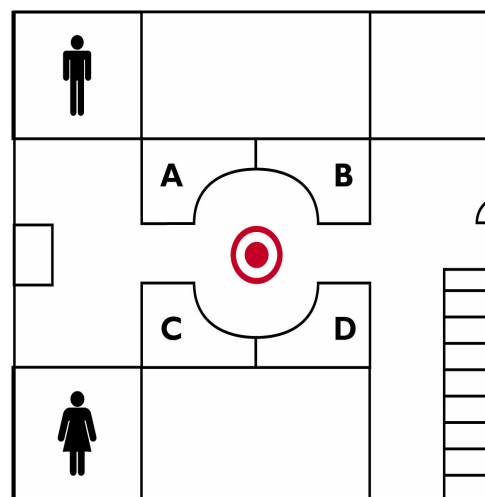
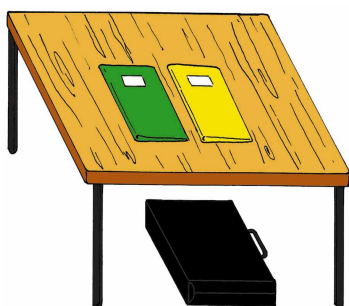
Consequences for a speaking test to meet the CEFR approach in terms of marking criteria

- # Should all categories be incorporated(?)**
- # Should the category definitions for each level be slavishly kept to(?)**
- # How can they be grouped in clusters(?)**
- # How can assessors be trained to understand and apply the level-based criteria(?)**

1. Commands and questions	Test Objective
2. <i>(using materials supplied by examiner)</i>	
3. What is the time?	Time
4. What is the date today?	Date
5. Please open the book/magazine/newspaper at page...	Verbs/Number
6. Please spell Mr/Miss/Mrs/Ms (surname)	Verbs/Spelling
7. Please write this number (2 digits)	Verbs/Number
8. Please give me (pence and pounds)	Transactions
9. How much is that? (place a different amount in front of candidate)	Transactions



BRUSSELS	0702	0815
LONDON	0850	1005



- | | |
|---|---------------------|
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| 9. How much is that? (place a different amount in front of candidate) | Transactions |
| 10. <i>(using the Command Sheet)</i> | |
| 11. Please show me something red/blue | Colour |
| 12. Please show me something round/square | Shape |
| 13. Please show me something made of wood/glass | Material |
| 14. Please show me the first/last train to London | Adjectives |
| 15. What time is the first/last train from Brussels? | Time |
| 16. Which is the largest/smallest pencil? | Comparatives |
| 17. What is on/under the table? / next to the red van? | Prepositions |

I: Hello. My name's (*give full name*). Can you spell your family name for me please?

C: (*Spells family name.*)

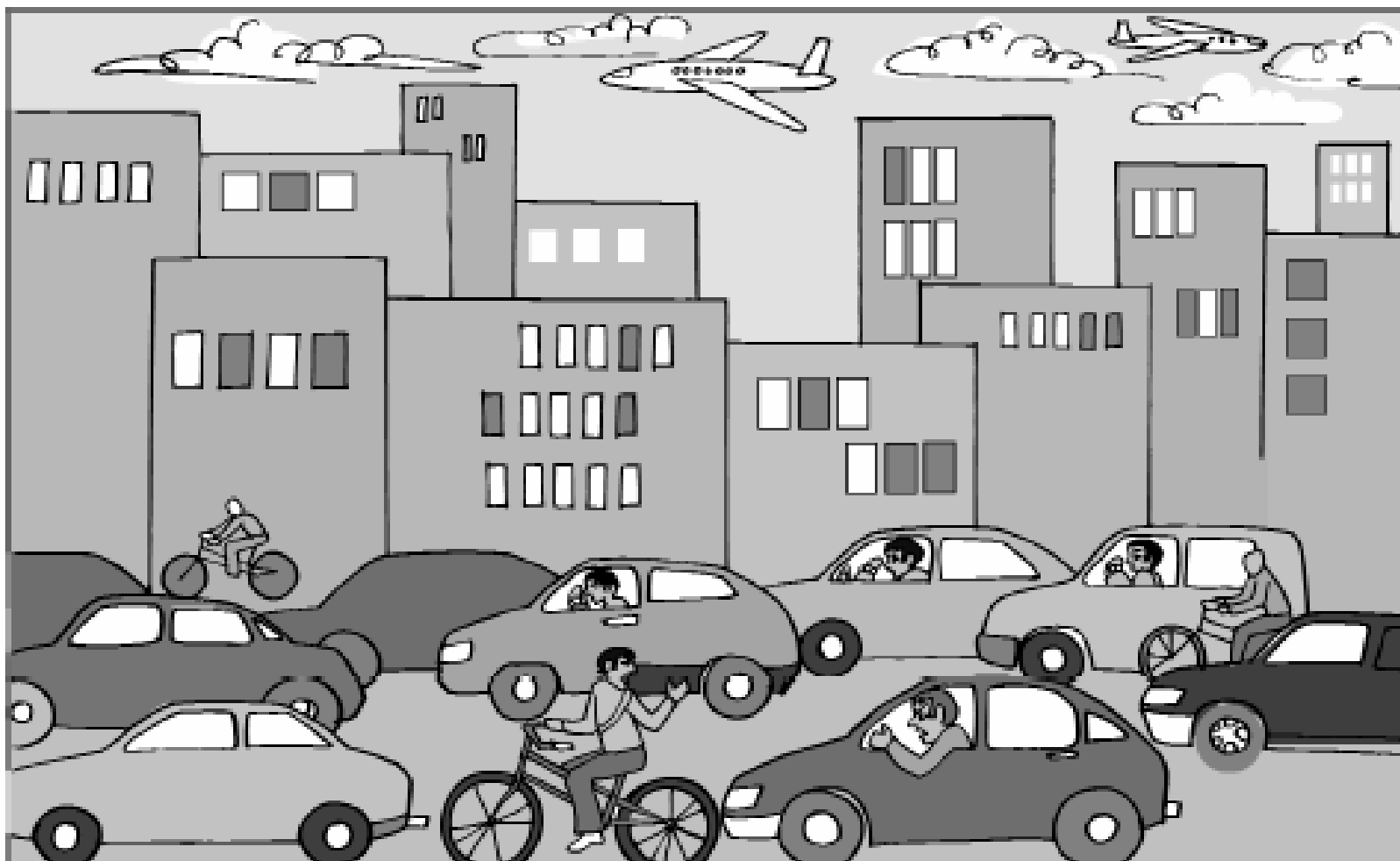
I: Thank you. And where are you from?

C: (*Responds.*)

I: Thank you. Now, in the first part of the test I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself. All right? (*Choose **up to five** questions as time will allow. Name the topic; eg "Now, **Home Life**".*)

Home Life

- Can you tell me something about your home?
- What kinds of things do you do with your family?
- Can you tell me something about family meals?
- Which member of your family are you most like? In what way?



Describe what is happening in this picture.

How long do you think the people have been there?

What might happen if this situation continues?

How do you think the people who are cycling/sitting in the traffic might feel at the end of the day/week?

If you lived in this city, how would you travel to work?

What can be done about these traffic problems?

Have you ever been stuck in a traffic jam? Tell us about it.

Would you consider living in a city like this? Why/why not?

What other problems do you think this city could have?

What would you say to a friend who was thinking of moving to a city like this?

How to do it?



How to do it?

www.telc.net (Free downloadables)

g.tranter@wbtests.de

Just “telc” to me!